Ireland:
Food, Culture, and Politics

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This essay focuses on the political, economic, and cultural history of the Republic of Ireland and of Northern Ireland. It is written for the participants in Stanford Travel/Study's program, Ireland: Food, Culture, and Politics, March 28-April 8, 2022.

I begin with ancient and medieval Ireland (7000 BCE-1170 CE) – original settlement, Celtic conquest, and Viking influences. I next look at British Ireland (1170-1921) and review Anglo-Norman settlement, English crown colonization, and the causes of the Great Irish Famine (1845-1849). For independent Ireland (1921-present), I ask how Irish politics evolved and why Ireland had slow economic growth until 1973 and then became Europe's fastest-growing economy. In 1921, Northern Ireland chose to remain part of the UK instead of joining independent Ireland. I examine political and economic transitions in Ulster during the past century, focusing especially on the Troubles (1969-1998) – the violent struggle between Protestant unionists and Catholic republicans. I append a time line, a bibliography, and a description of sites that I visited in Ireland.

Ancient and Medieval Ireland (7000 BCE-1170)

Settlement of Ireland (7000 BCE-400 CE). The earliest known inhabitants of Ireland were nomadic hunter-gatherers of the Mesolithic Era (Middle Stone Age, 7000-3500 BCE). Their diet consisted primarily of fish and shellfish along with berries, nuts, and vegetables. Seabirds and wild deer were sources of meat. For transportation Mesolithic peoples relied on coracles, round boats made of skins stretched over a light wooden frame, which allowed mobility along Ireland's jagged coasts.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Hunter_gatherer%27s_camp_at_Irish_National_Heritage_Park_-_geograph.org.uk_-_1252699.jpg>

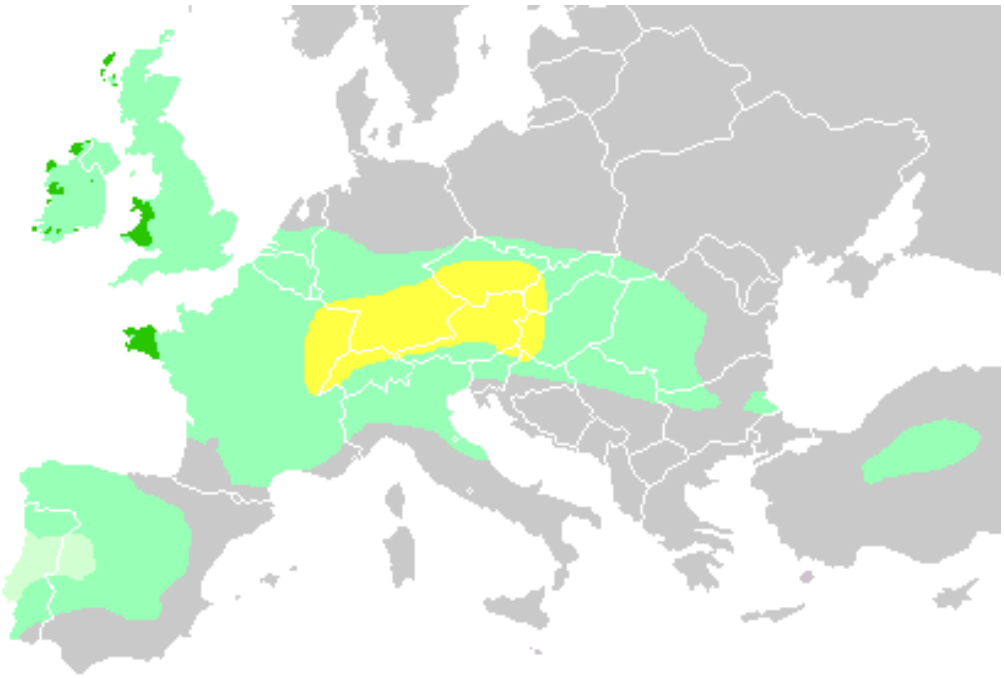
Reconstruction of a Mesolithic Hunter-Gatherer's Camp – Irish National Heritage Park, Wexford

Peoples of the Neolithic Era (New Stone Age, 3500-750 BCE) migrated from Asia to Ireland, probably via Spain and Brittany. They brought polished stone tools, superior to the flint and bone implements used by Mesolithic peoples, and food production systems based on growing crops (barley and wheat) and raising livestock (cattle, pigs, sheep, and goats). They built permanent settlements, stone megaliths, and dolmens (chambered tombs).

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:First_Irish_farmers_hut,_Irish_National_Heritage_Park_-_geograph.org.uk_-_1252729.jpg>

Reconstruction of a Neolithic Farmer's Permanent Hut – Irish National Heritage Park, Wexford

In the late 3rd millennium BCE, the Celts, red-haired Indo-Europeans, began migrating westward from Central Asia to Austria and later to France. By 750 BCE, the Celts arrived in Ireland and Great Britain and introduced iron plows and weapons, pottery wheels, and gold minting. The warlike Celts built fortified settlements (hill forts) with sophisticated weaponry.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Celtic_expansion_in_Europe.png>

Celtic Settlements in Europe – Hallstatt Core (Yellow), Maximum Spread, c. 275 BCE (Light Green), Celtic Languages Spoken Today (Dark Green)

Celtic social hierarchies included an upper class of nobility, druids (priests), and bards, a second tier of farmers and craftsmen,

and a lower level of slaves. The Celtic culture was based on a strong clan system and featured feasting, drinking, gift exchange, and combat. Cattle were an important source of food and a symbol of wealth. Strict laws governed building, milling, and brewing. The Irish Gaelic language, spoken in Ireland, is in the Goidelic (q-Celtic) language group (along with Scottish Gaelic and Manx Gaelic). The other modern Celtic language group is Brithonic (p-Celtic), which includes Welsh, Breton, and Cornish.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Craggaunowen_Project,_The_Crannog_-_geograph.org.uk_-_793400.jpg>

Reconstructed Celtic Roundhouse and Rath (Ring Fortress) – Craggaunowen, County Clare

Early Christian Ireland (400-795). Ireland was never part of the Roman Empire. In the late 4th century, when Rome was losing control of Great Britain, Irish pirates, called Scotti, raided western Britain. After Rome left Britain in 410, Irish settlers moved into western Britain and spread the Gaelic language to Scotland and the Isle of Man. The Irish Dal Riata Kingdom expanded into Argyll (western Scotland), and in the 9th century, Kenneth MacAlpin, the King of Dal Riata, defeated the Picts and began the unification of Scotland.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Scotland_Dunadd.jpg>

Dunadd Hill Fort, Argyll, Scotland –
7th-century Capital of the Irish Dal Riata Kingdom

In 431, Palladius, a missionary from Gaul, began the conversion of Ireland to Christianity. St. Patrick followed in 432. Irish Christianity spread rapidly because it syncretized beliefs from Celtic Druidism and incorporated the poetic tradition of Celtic bards. By the end of the 6th century, Christianity was well established in Ireland and the political structure had evolved into seven over-kingdoms and numerous sub-kingdoms.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Glendalough_monastery.jpg>

Saint Kevin's Monastery, Glendalough, County Wicklow – Monastic Settlement Founded in the 6th century

During the 7th and 8th centuries, Ireland enjoyed a Golden Age. Its decentralized kingdoms supported the spread of monastic

centers throughout Ireland (notably at Armagh and Kildare). The monasteries and their leaders, the abbots, initially focused on evangelism, scholarship, and asceticism. Then the monasteries became proto-towns and centers for artisanal activity and farm marketing.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:KellsFol292rIncipJohn.jpg>

The Book of Kells, Opening of the Gospel of John – Trinity College Library, Dublin, 9th century

Many Irish monks spent their lives in exile in Britain or Western Europe and served as leading scholars, missionaries, and advisors at court. One of the earliest was St. Columba (521-597)

who established a renowned monastery at Iona and led the conversion of the Picts in northern Scotland. In the 8th and 9th centuries, Ireland endured a long, bloody struggle for political supremacy between two high kingdoms – the Eoganachta, who ruled from the Rock of Cashel in southern Ireland, and the Ui Neill, whose capital was Tara in north-central Ireland. The Ui Neill won and established a supreme kingship – a loose federation.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Irish_Cross_at_the_Rock_of_Cashel.jpg>

Irish Cross at the Rock of Cashel –
Capital of the Eoganachta Rulers of Southern Ireland, 9th century

Viking Incursions in Ireland (795-1170). During their four centuries of expansion outside Scandinavia, the Vikings evolved –

from raiders to traders to settlers/rulers to mercenaries. Norwegian Vikings could reach the northern Scottish islands in 24 hours and enjoy easy access to Great Britain and Ireland. The Viking raiders focused their attacks on monasteries (beginning in Iona in 795), because they were rich sources of gold, wines, and food stores. Following raids from 795 to 839, the Vikings established permanent trading bases in coastal Ireland – at Dublin, Wexford, Waterford, Cork, and Limerick.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Viking_Ireland.png>

Viking Bases in Coastal Ireland – Key Ports for Viking Trade

Between 839 and 914, the Vikings specialized in merchant trade, adopted Christianity, and became integrated into Irish

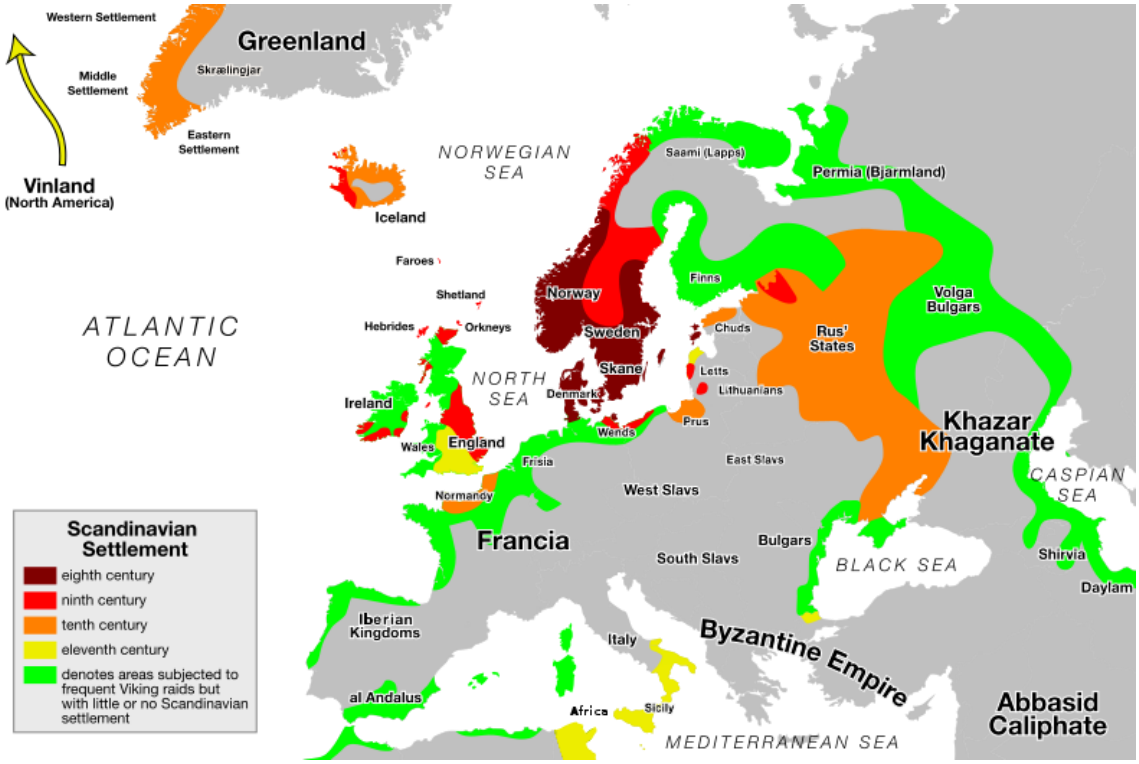
society. Their principal base, Dublin, became a major center of trade, whose main exports were slaves, hides, textiles, and many artisanal crafts and whose imports included walrus ivory, amber, and brooches from Scandinavia, pottery and metal goods from England, pottery and glass from the Continent, and silk from the East. Dublin excavations have yielded more variety and higher quality goods than excavations in any other Viking town.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Skuldelev_II.jpg>

Skudelev II, Large Viking Warship Built in Dublin, c. 1042 – Recovered and Displayed in Skudelev, Near Roskilde, Denmark

From 914 to 1014, Ireland suffered new Viking raids as defenses against them elsewhere in Europe grew stronger, but from

1014 onward the Irish conquered and ruled the Viking settlements. The Vikings then paid tribute to the Irish, but continued to run international trade and play an important political role, fighting on all sides in the interminable Irish rivalries.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Viking_Expansion.svg>

Viking Scandinavian Settlements, 8th-11th centuries

Brian Boru (*c.* 940-1014), the King of Munster, briefly unified Ireland in 1002 and became High King. At the Battle of Clontarf in 1014, Brian defeated a coalition of Viking forces from

Ireland, Orkney, and the Isle of Man, but he was killed in the battle. Irish political infighting then resumed. The Vikings became mercenaries and were not fully subjugated until the Norman-English conquest of Dublin in 1170.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Www.wesleyjohnston.com-users-ireland-maps-historical-map1014.gif>

Ireland, After the Battle of Clontarf, 1014 – A Patchwork of Competing Small Kingdoms

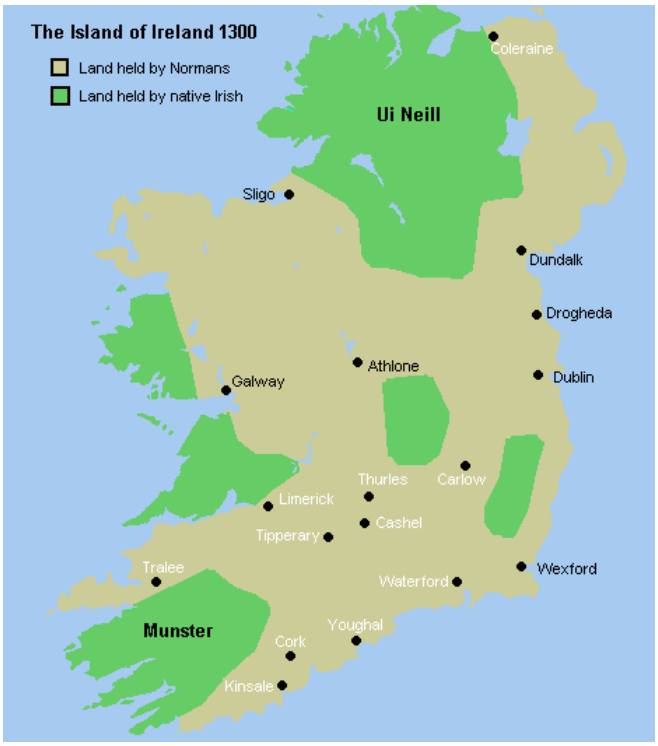
Norman and British Ireland (1170-1921)

Anglo-Norman Ireland (1170-1536). Following the Norman conquest of England in 1066, the French-speaking, Norman military aristocracy embarked on a military takeover of the most productive parts of Great Britain. A century later, the Anglo-Normans expanded into Ireland. Richard de Clare (1130-1176), the Earl of Pembroke (known in Ireland as Strongbow), invaded Ireland with Norman-Welsh soldiers in 1167 and took Dublin in 1170.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Marriage_of_strongbow_and_aoife.jpg>

Anglo-Norman Invasion of Ireland, 1167-1171 –
The Marriage of Strongbow and Aoife, Daniel Maclise, 1854,
National Gallery of Ireland, Dublin

Henry II, the Plantagenet King of England, invaded Ireland in 1171 and forced Strongbow, other Anglo-Norman leaders, and many Irish kings to pay homage to his crown. Thereafter, much of Ireland became an English colony with the introduction of English law, parliamentary and local government, and manorial agriculture.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Www.wesleyjohnston.com-users-ireland-maps-historical-map1300.gif>

Anglo-Norman Ireland, c. 1300 – Land Held by Anglo-Normans (Tan), Land Held by Native Irish (Green)

The Anglo-Norman aristocracy used military force to colonize the best agricultural land and establish new towns.

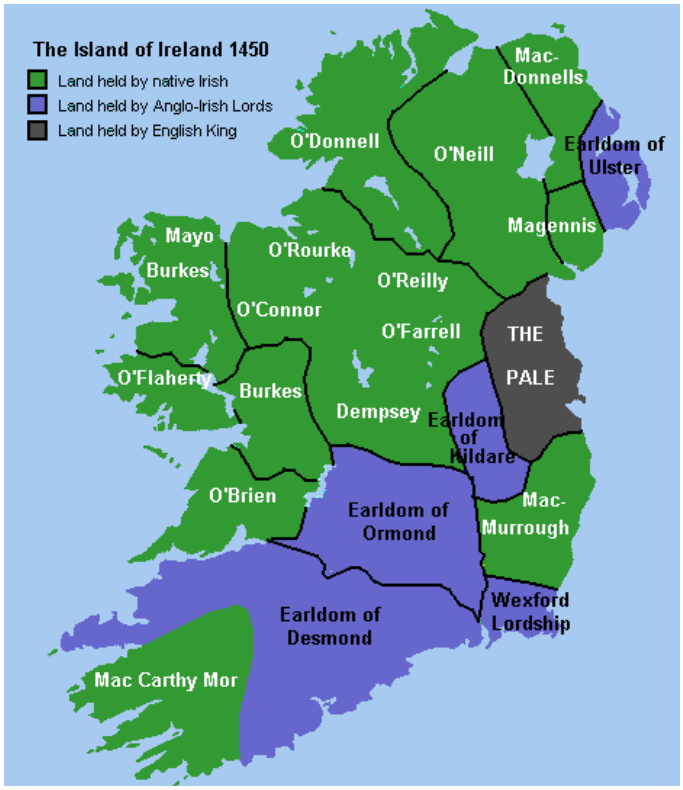
Anglo-Norman military force featured skilled horsemen, crossbowmen, and users of siege weaponry. The Irish kings retaliated with guerrilla tactics. The key to Anglo-Norman success was their building of fortified stone castles, often accompanied by walled market towns. The feudal lords then ruled their estates and towns with church aid and gained control of the Irish parliament.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Athenry_Castle.jpg>

Athenry Castle, Athenry, County Galway –
Built c. 1240 by Meyler de Bermingham, an Anglo-Norman Lord

By 1300, the Anglo-Normans controlled three-fourths of Ireland including the most fertile regions. Irish kings or clans retained control of most of the north and parts of the west. Following conquest, the Anglo-Norman lords set up manorial

estates, opened new farm-land, and imported English and Welsh peasants for their labor forces. In their castle-protected, walled towns, the Anglo-Norman elite taxed trade, charged rents, and prospered. But following the Black Death plague in the 14th century, the Irish kings gradually reasserted control. By 1500 the Anglo-Norman lords held only about one-fourth of Ireland – the English Pale around Dublin and much of the south-coastal region.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ireland_1450.png>

Anglo-Norman Ireland, c. 1450 – Land Held by Anglo-Normans (Purple), Irish Lords (Green), and the English Crown (Black)

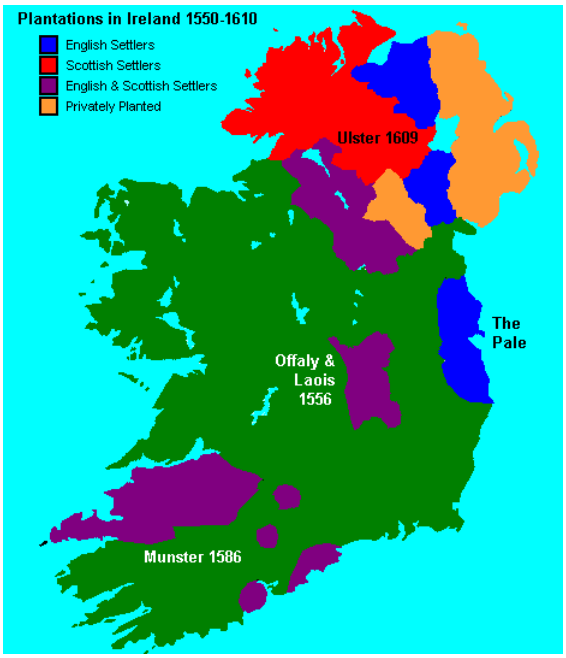
Colonial Ireland (1536-1801). In the mid-16th century England strived to strengthen its hold on Ireland. The Protestant Reformation began in Ireland in 1536 when King Henry VIII of England was made head of the Church of Ireland. Henry named himself King of Ireland in 1541, deepening English rule. After O'Neill's Rebellion (the Nine-Year War, 1593-1602) was harshly suppressed by Queen Elizabeth I, the power of Gaelic lordships was ended.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Aodh_M%C3%B3r_U%C3%AE_N%C3%A9ill_(anglicis%C3%A9_comme,_Hugh_The_Great_O%27Neill).jpg>

Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone – Leader of O'Neill's Rebellion in the Nine Years' War (1593-1602)

In the 17th and 18th centuries, England took land and the freedom of religion away from Irish Catholics. In 1609, King

James I removed Catholics from their lands in Ulster and gradually re-settled 30,000 immigrant tenant farmers from Scotland and 10,000 from England, mostly in Antrim and Down Counties. After a long Irish rebellion (1641-1651), the Cromwell government's harsh Act of Settlement (1652) led to the share of farm land owned by Irish Catholics falling from 70 percent to 10 percent.

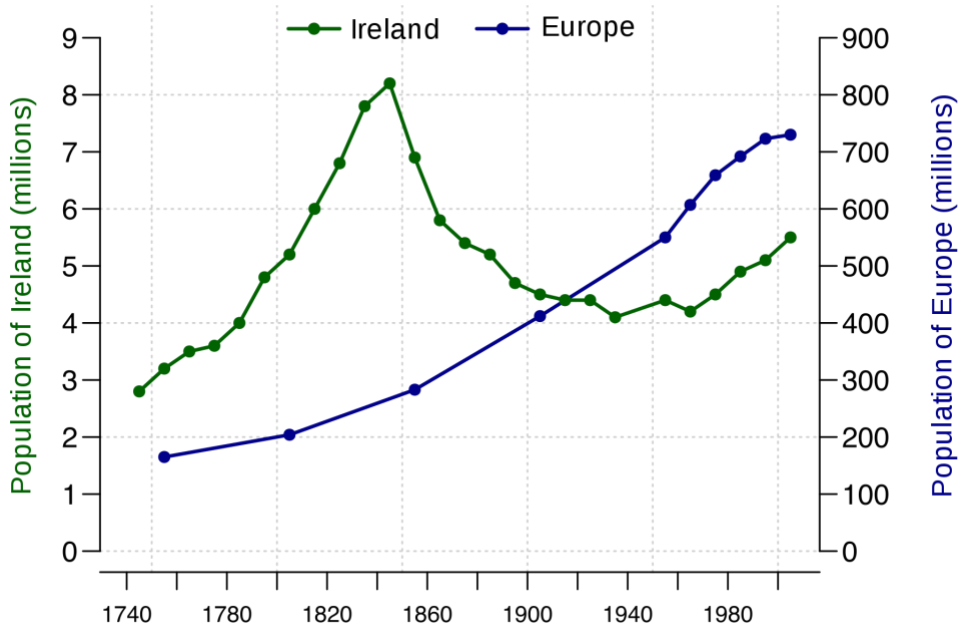


Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Ireland_in_1609.gif>

The Plantations in Ireland, 1550-1610, Launched the Protestant Ascendancy – Privately Planted (Orange), English Settlers (Blue), Scottish Settlers (Red), Scottish and English Settlers (Purple)

In a series of acts known as the Penal Legislation, Catholic priests were banned and Catholics were not allowed to vote or

purchase land. A severe famine in 1740-1741 caused at least 300,000 deaths, but famine occurred infrequently. A quarter of a million Ulster Protestants (the Scots Irish) and 100,000 Irish Catholics emigrated to North America during the 18th century. Nevertheless, Ireland's population expanded fourfold between 1680 and 1841 (millions): 1680, 2; 1735, 3; 1785, 5.4; 1821, 6.8; and 1841, 8.2. Even the poorest Irish farmers had a nutritious diet, based on potatoes (after 1750), dairy products, and oats.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Population_of_Ireland_and_Europe_1750_to_2005.svg>

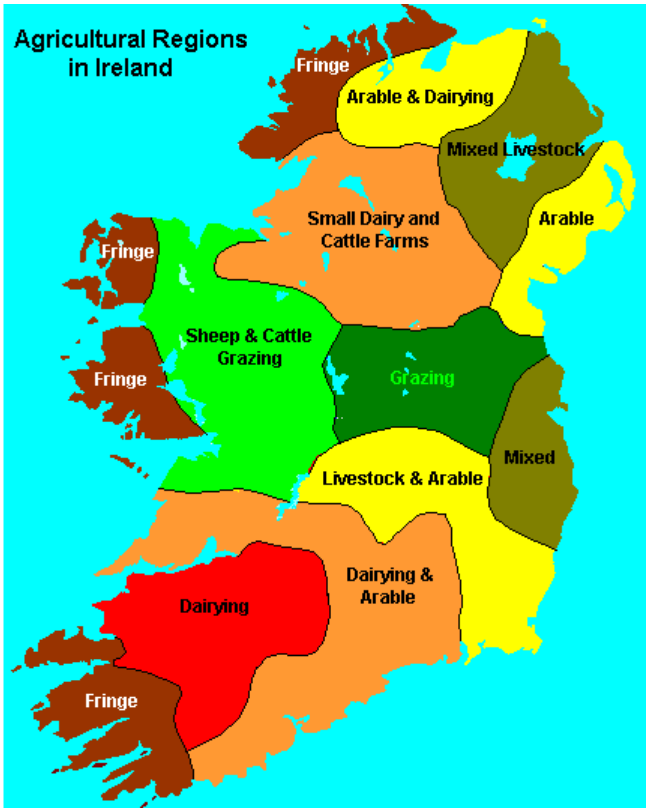
Populations of Ireland and Europe, 1750-2005 –
Irish Population Peaked at 8.2 million (1841), Now 6.8 million

In 1798, Ulster experienced a short but severe rebellion in which 35,000 Irish died. Fearing that Ireland might try to ally with Napoleonic France, the British government, led by William Pitt, bribed members of the Irish Parliament to pass the Irish Act of Union (1800), ending Ireland's parliament and placing Ireland in the United Kingdom in 1801.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Royal_Coat_of_Arms_of_the_United_Kingdom_(HM_Government).svg>

Irish Act of Union (1800) – Ireland Became Part of the United Kingdom, Irish Parliament Was Dissolved

Ireland in the United Kingdom (1801-1921). In 1821, the population of Ireland was 6.2 million, arable land was 14 million acres, and 5,000 Protestant landlords owned 90 percent of the farmland. By 1921, Ireland's population had declined to 4.4 million, and (following massive land reform, 1891-1909) 250,000 ex-tenants owned 80 percent of the farmland. The Irish population peaked in 1841 at 8.2 million but fell to 4.4 million in 1921.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Www.wesleyjohnston.com-users-ireland-maps-island_agriculture.gif>

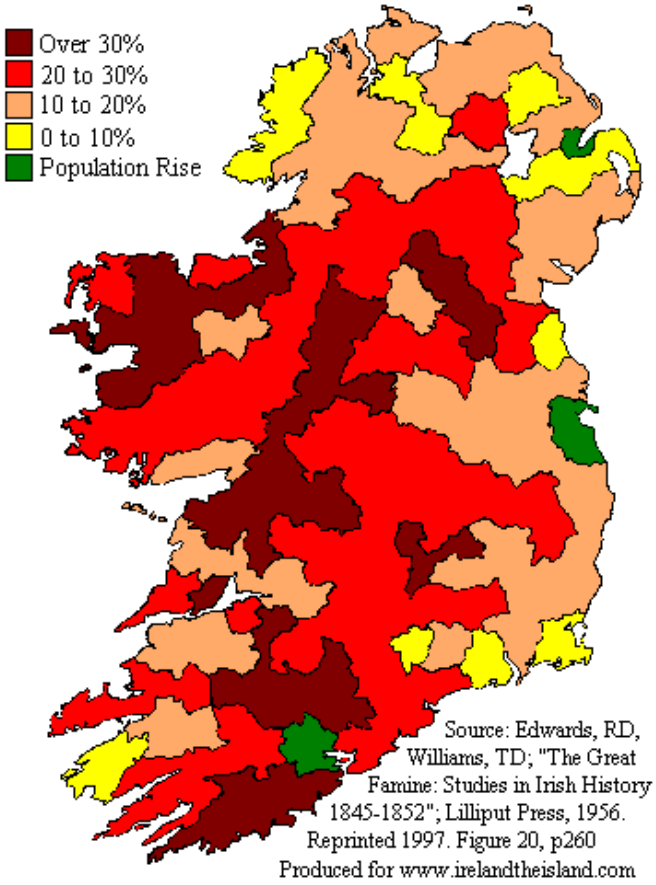
Agricultural Regions of Ireland – Early 19th century

Famine and emigration caused that decline. During the Great Irish Famine (1845-1849), 1 million people died from starvation and disease (mainly typhus and relapsing fever) and 1 million emigrated (to North America and Britain). By 1845, two-fifths of Ireland's farmers, located mostly in the west and south, relied on a skewed, though nutritious, diet of potatoes and milk. In 1845-1848, the potato crop was devastated by potato blight (*phytophthora infestans*).

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:An_Irish_Peasant_Family_Discovering_the_Blight_of_their_Store_by_Daniel_MacDonald.jpg>

Great Irish Famine (1845-1849) –
An Irish Peasant Family Discovering the Blight of their Store, by Daniel MacDonald, c. 1847

The British government responded ineptly – a cash-for-work program of public works was ended in 1847 and replaced by food aid via soup kitchens, which briefly fed 3 million. But Britain soon turned the problem over to local work-houses. Emigration from Ireland was high before and after the famine (millions): 1800-1845, 1; 1845-1851, 1; and 1851-1921, 2.5.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ireland_population_change_1841_1851.png>

Great Irish Famine (1845-1849) – Population Change by County, 1841-1851

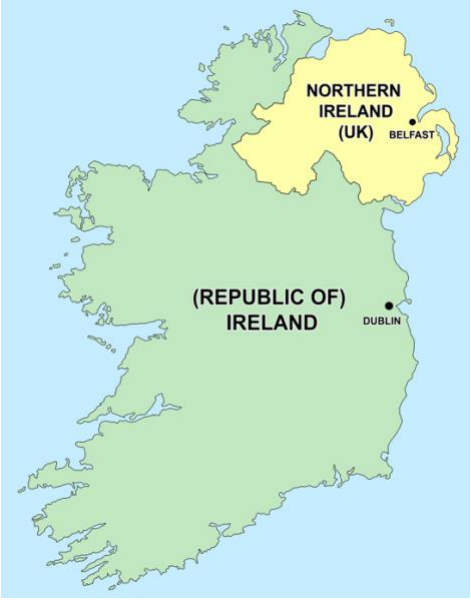
The key political issue in 19th-century Ireland was home rule versus independence. William Gladstone supported home rule but failed to win parliamentary approval. The Home Rule Act (1914) re-instituted an Irish Parliament within the UK but was delayed with the onset of World War I. Supporters of independence had formed secret societies: Irish Republican Brotherhood (IRB), 1858; Fenian Brotherhood, 1859; and Irish Republican Army (IRA), 1919. The IRB precipitated the Easter Rising (1916), which Britain suppressed in a week. IRA guerrillas fought British troops to a draw in the Anglo-Irish War (1919-1921).

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Irish_Republic_Flag.svg>

Easter Rising, 1916 – Flag Flown Over the General Post Office in Dublin, Occupied by Irish Republicans

Irish Free State and Republic of Ireland (1921-present)

Irish Free State and Ireland (1921-1949). Following the Anglo-Irish War (1919-1921), Britain concluded the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921) with the provisional Irish government, led by Éamon de Valera. The Treaty created the Irish Free State as a self-governing dominion in the British Commonwealth, consisting of 26 counties with a population of 3.1 million. Six counties in Northern Ireland, with 1.3 million people, opted to remain in the United Kingdom.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Map_of_Ireland%27s_capitals.png>

Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921) –
Irish Free State (26 Counties) and Northern Ireland (6 Counties)

A civil war ensued in 1922-1923, between Irish government forces and the Irish Republican Army that opposed partition, causing 2,000 deaths. Cumann na nGaedhael (Party of the Irish), led by William Cosgrave, defeated de Valera's Sinn Féin Party in the 1923 election and governed until 1932. Cosgrave repaired war-damaged infrastructure, supported small-scale farming, and invested in hydroelectricity. Ireland exported half of its output.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:William_Thomas_Cosgrave.jpg>

William T. Cosgrave (1880-1965) –
Led the Cumann na nGaedhael Government, 1923-1932

De Valera's new party, Fianna Fáil, was in power between 1932 and 1948. Under de Valera's leadership, Ireland adopted a

new constitution in 1937, creating the independent Republic of Ireland (Eire) within the Commonwealth. In 1938, de Valera negotiated treaties with the UK that closed British bases in Ireland, settled Irish land payments to Britain, and reduced tariffs. In the Second World War (1939-1945), Ireland was officially neutral (but de facto pro-Allies). De Valera rejected an offer by Winston Churchill, then Prime Minister of the United Kingdom, to support Irish reunification in return for Ireland's joining the Allies.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:De_Valera_LCCN2016822004_(crop).jpg>

Éamon de Valera (1882-1975) –
Fianna Fáil Prime Minster (Taoiseach), 1932-1948, 1951-1954, 1957-1959 – President, 1959-1973

Fianna Fáil attempted to achieve economic self-sufficiency, raising industrial tariff protection from 9 to 45 percent by 1936 and requiring majority Irish ownership of industrial firms in 1934. During the Great Depression and World War II, Irish exports fell. An early industrial spurt peaked, and the economy stagnated. The per capita income in Ireland grew at the very modest rate of 1 percent per year between 1922 and 1949.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Irish_Free_State_Butter,_Eggs_and_Bacon_for_our_Breakfasts_Du_beurre,_des_%C5%93ufs_et_du_bacon_de_l%E2%80%99%C3%89tat_libre_d%E2%80%99Irlande_au_d%C3%A9jeuner.jpg>

Ireland's Exports Fell in the Great Depression – Ad in Canada, "Irish Free State Butter, Eggs, and Bacon For Our Children"

Republic of Ireland – Political Evolution (1949-present). Between 1948 and 2021, Ireland had a stable democracy with political leadership exercised by two parties, usually governing in coalitions. Fianna Fáil, de Valera's center-left party, led reformist governments in 46 of those 73 years. But two Fianna Fáil Taoiseachs (prime ministers), Charles Haughey and Bertie Ahern, were personally plagued with corruption. Fine Gael, a center-right party that ruled in coalitions, led reformist governments during 27 years in this recent period. Fine Gael-led coalitions were in power between 2011 and 2020, and Leo Varadkar, an openly-gay physician, was Taoiseach between 2017 and 2020.

In June 2020, Fianna Fáil, Fine Gael, and the Green Party formed a new coalition government. Fianna Fáil leader Micheál Martin, former Minister for Foreign Affairs, will serve as Taoiseach until December 2022, and Varadkar will resume that position from then until the end of the elected term.

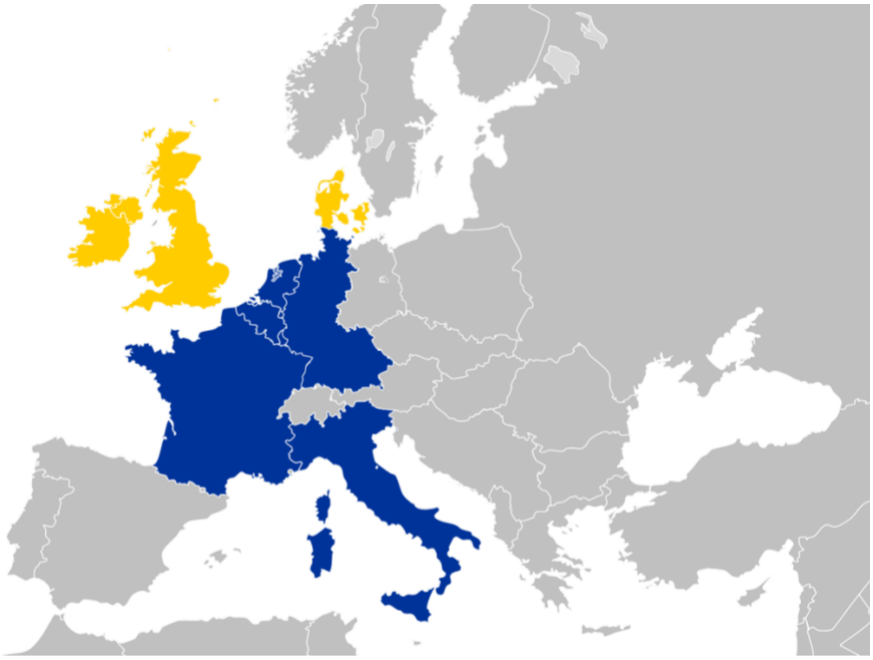
Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Miche%C3%A1l_Martin_TD_(cropped).jpg>

Micheál Martin (1960 –), Fianna Fáil Leader – Taoiseach, June 2020-December 2022 (By Coalition Agreement)

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Leo_Varadkar_TD_(cropped).jpg>

Leo Varadkar (1979–), Fine Gael Leader – Taoiseach, June 2017-June 2020 and After December 2022 (By Coalition Agreement)

Ireland shifted its international orientation away from dependence on the United Kingdom. Through the Republic of Ireland Act (1949), it left the British Commonwealth. Ireland joined the European Economic Community (later European Union) in 1973, the European Monetary System in 1979, and the Euro Zone in 2002, adopting the Euro as its currency.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:EC09-1973_European_Community_map_enlargement.svg>

First Enlargement of the European Economic Community (1973) – Ireland, United Kingdom, and Denmark

Seán Lemass, Fianna Fáil Taoiseach (1959-1966), reversed economic policy to encourage foreign investment and industrial

exports. Thereafter, Ireland introduced low tariffs, streamlined administration, a low corporate tax rate (12.5 percent), tax holidays, and improved infrastructure, thereby setting the stage for a massive economic transformation.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Se%C3%A1n_Lemass,_1966.jpg>

Seán Lemass (1899-1971), Taoiseach and Fianna Fáil Leader (1959-1966) – Economic Policymaker for Modern Ireland

Since 1990, Ireland has enacted social reforms that greatly reduced the country's earlier conservative orientation. Two women, Mary Robinson (1990-1997) and Mary McAleese (1997-2011), have been distinguished Presidents. The Catholic influence on primary and secondary education has been diminished. Three

major social reforms have been introduced – divorce was legalized (1997), same-sex marriage was allowed (2015), and a ban on abortion was removed from the constitution (2018).

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Mary_Robinson_(2014).jpg>

Mary Robinson (1944 –), President of Ireland, 1990-1997, and Chancellor of the University of Dublin, 1998-2019

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:McAleese.jpg>

Mary McAleese (1951 –), President of Ireland, 1997-2011, and Chancellor of the University of Dublin, 2019 –

Republic of Ireland – Economic Transformation (1949-present). Between 1949 and 1973, Ireland's rate of economic growth was the slowest in Europe. But between 1973 and 2020, it was the fastest. Several factors underpinned that stunning turnaround – political stability, an educated and English-speaking workforce, EU membership from 1973 (providing market access in the EU and EU transfer payments to Ireland), a social partnership (industrial harmony via trade union-employer-government

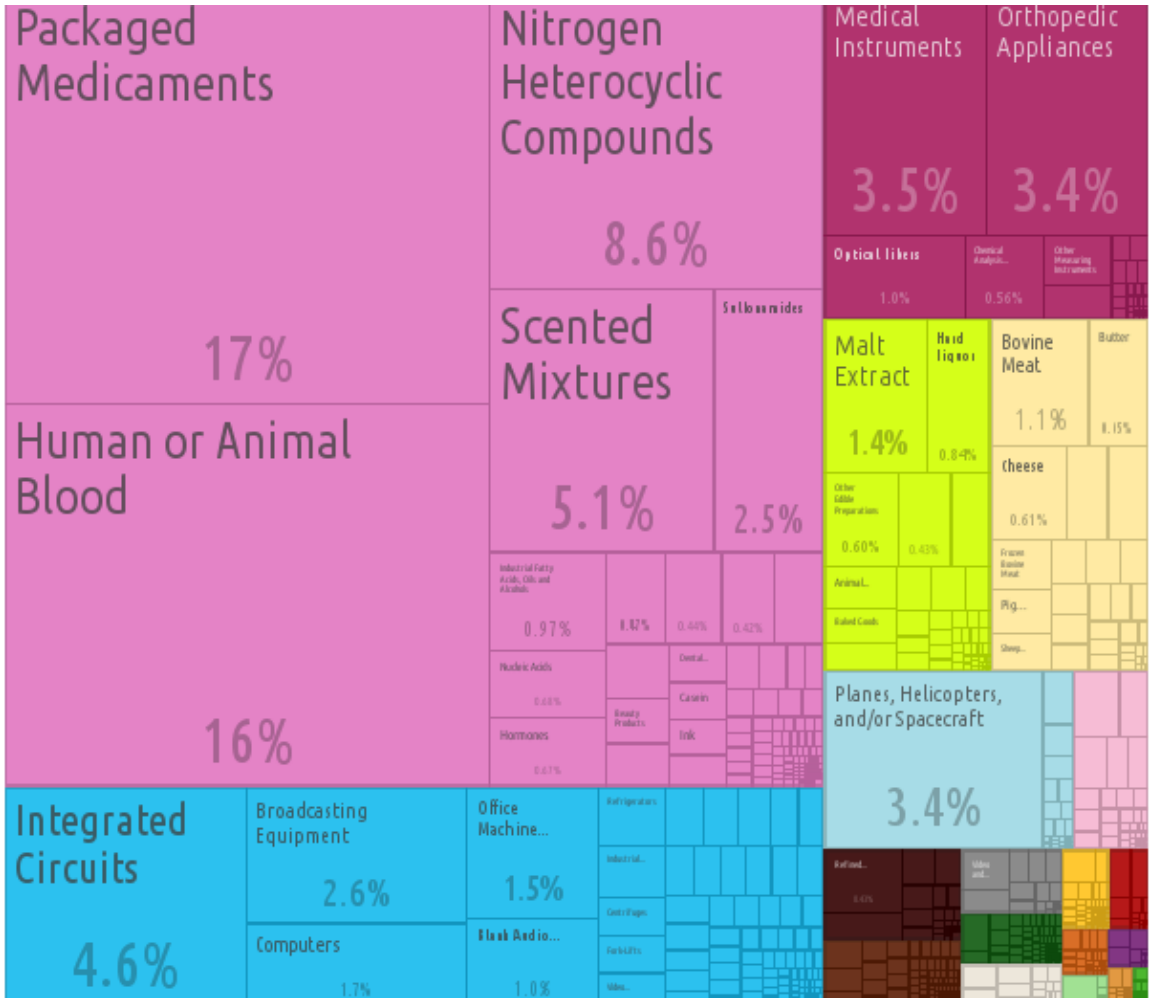
negotiations), and Industrial Development Authority incentives (corporate tax rate of only 12.5 percent, tax holidays).

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Trinity_College.jpg>

Ireland's Highly Educated Workforce – Trinity College, University of Dublin, Founded 1592

Beginning in the 1960s, Ireland devised an innovative industrial development strategy. Foreign investors would bring capital, technology, and marketing networks, they would hire and train skilled Irish and new emigrant workers, and their high-technology products mostly would be exported. The targeted areas were pharmaceuticals (Pfizer, Novartis), electronics (Intel, Hewlett-Packard), digital media (Google, Facebook), and

information technology (Apple, LinkedIn). By 2000, Ireland had attracted all 10 of the largest pharmaceutical firms and 12 of the 20 largest electronics firms in the US.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Ireland_Exports_Treemap_2017.svg>

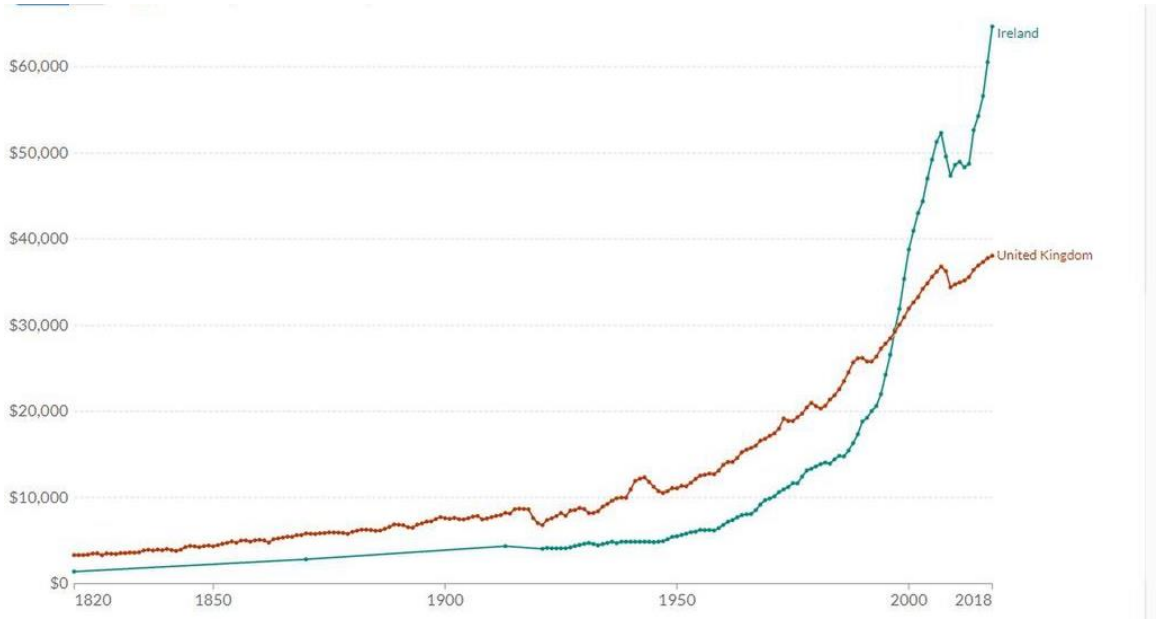
Proportional Representation of Ireland's Export Earnings, 2017 – Pharmaceutical Products (Lavender), Electronic Equipment (Blue), and Medical Apparatus (Purple) Constituted Three-fourths

The annual rate of growth of Ireland's real per capita GDP (measured by the World Bank at Purchasing Power Parity in constant 2017 dollars) between 1995 and 2007 was a very impressive 5.2 percent. Ireland became known as the Celtic Tiger. But Ireland suffered an economic crisis after 2007. Per capita income fell by 12 percent in 2008-2009 and then was flat for four more years through 2013. Excessive loans for construction had created a property bubble that burst in 2008.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:IMG_187w.jpg>

Construction Mania in Ireland –
Housing Construction Site in Sandyford, Dublin, 2006

Although the Irish government guaranteed bank deposits, there was a run on Irish banks in 2009. The troika (EU Commission, European Central Bank, and the IMF) lent Ireland a bailout in 2010 ($122 billion), but forced the government to implement an extreme austerity program (raising taxes and cutting spending). Ireland complied, and the program was successful in reducing government deficits. Ireland then resumed growth at world-class rates.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Historical_economic_growth_of_Ireland_and_the_UK.jpg>

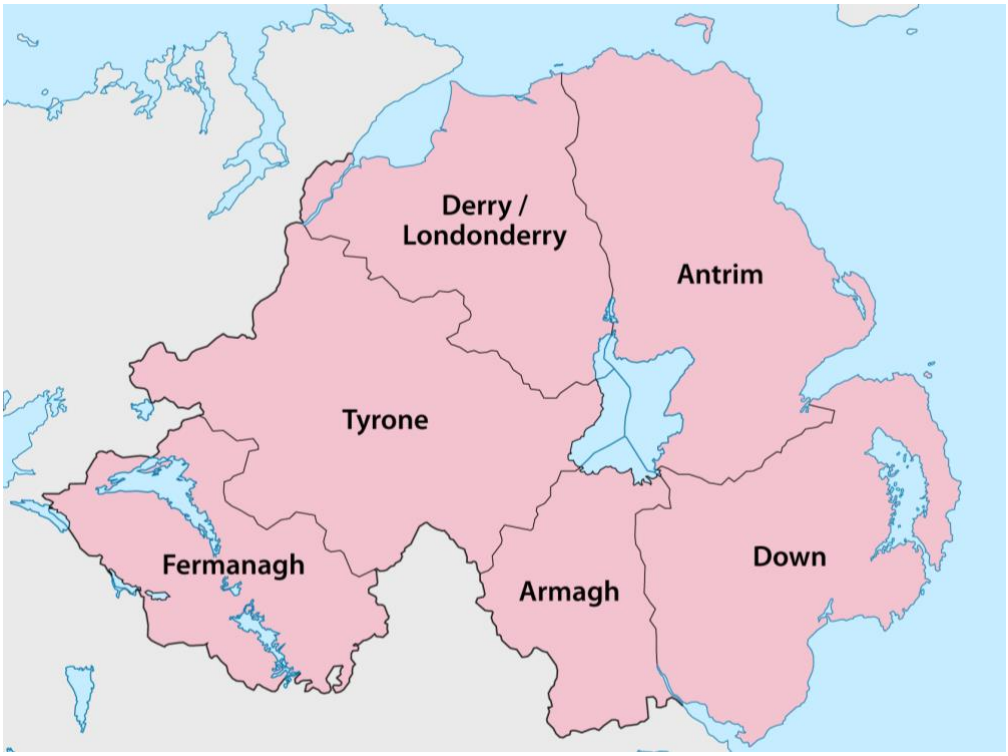
GDP Per Capita in Ireland (Green) and the United Kingdom (Red), 1820-2018

For the eight years after 2012, real per capita GDP in Ireland had an incredible spurt of growth – 8.4 percent per year – and reached a level of $93,180, 47 percent higher than the US level and double that of the UK. The basis of that growth was industrial exports – pharmaceuticals, chemicals, IT services, medical and electrical equipment, and computers. In 2020, Ireland tied with Switzerland for second of 189 countries in the UN Human Development Index (based on income, education, and health indicators), topped only by Norway (the UK ranked 13th and the US ranked 17th). That was an amazing feat for Ireland – a country that had been among Europe's poorest only a half century earlier.

Contemporary Ireland

Northern Ireland (1921-present)

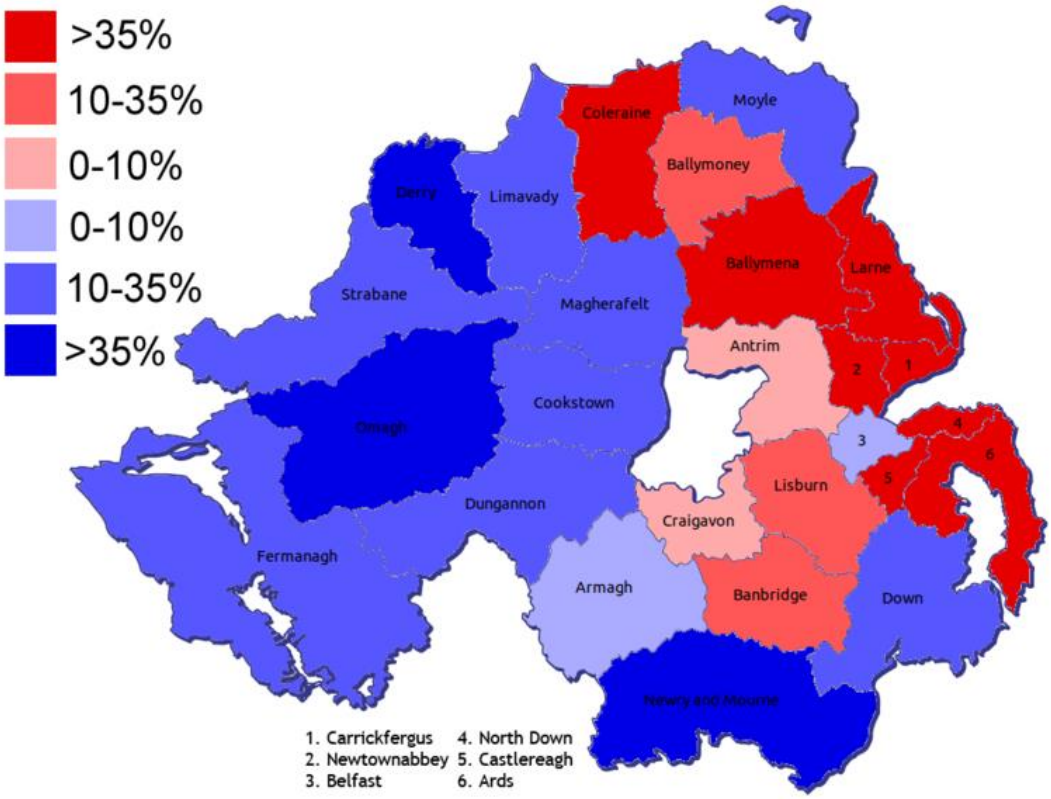
Protestant Province (1921-1969). The Government of Ireland Act (1920) partitioned Ireland into two regions – the south, with 3.1 million people, 26 counties, and 5/6 of the land, and the north, with 1.3 million people, 6 counties, and 1/6 of the land. After the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921) created the Irish Free State, Northern Ireland (Ulster) opted to remain part of the UK.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Northern_Ireland_-_Counties.png>

The Six Counties of Northern Ireland Remained in the United Kingdom – After the Government of Ireland Act (1920) and the Anglo-Irish Treaty (1921)

The north was divided between 870,000 Protestants, descendants of 17th-century Scots and English settlers who were unionist (desiring to remain in the UK), and 430,000 Catholics, native Irish descendants of Celtic immigrants who were republicans (desiring to unite with southern Ireland).



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Districts_of_Northern_Ireland_by_predominant_religion.png>

Religion in Northern Ireland – 2011 Census: Protestant, 48 percent; Catholic, 45 percent (Compared with 1921: Protestant, 67 percent; Catholic, 33 percent)

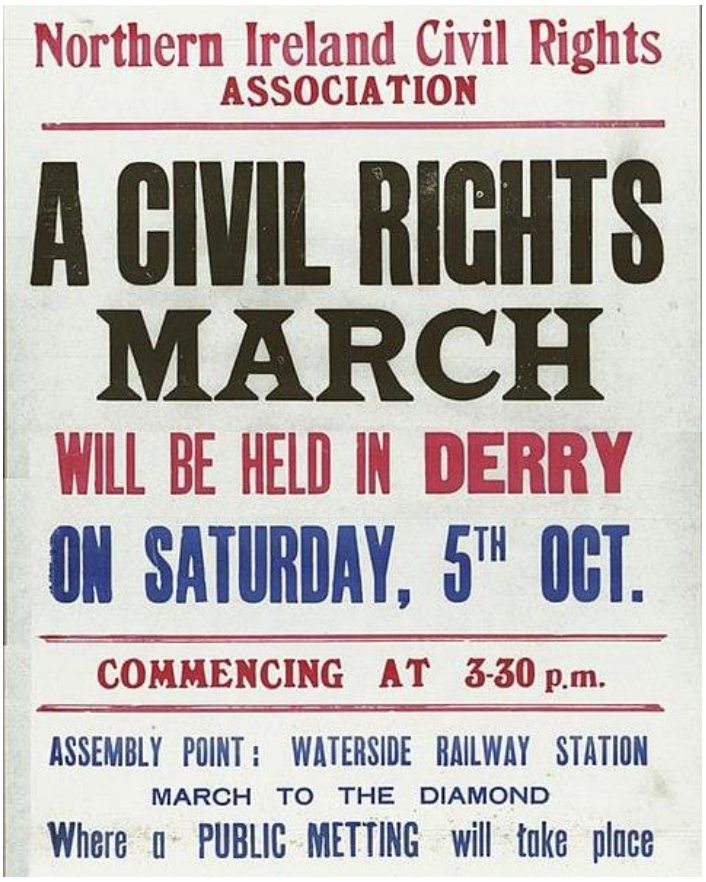
Between 1921 and 1969, the Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), which was Protestant and unionist, dominated Northern Ireland's politics – holding at least two-thirds of the seats in the Ulster parliament (Stormont) and in the UK parliament (Westminster). The UUP discriminated against the Catholic minority in government jobs, housing, and social services, creating resentment.

In that period, the economy went through three phases: 1921-1939, depression, loss of industry (shipbuilding and linen textiles), unemployment; 1939-1945, revival of shipbuilding (170 warships made in Belfast), aircraft manufacture; and 1945-1969, industrial decline, increase of public employment and UK subsidies. Belfast's famed shipyards, which had been a world-leader and launched the *Titanic* in 1912, were undercut by more efficient, lower-wage countries.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Harland_and_Wolff_mural_in_Belfast.jpg>

Northern Irish Shipbuilding Revived During World War II – Harland and Wolff Shipyard, Belfast

By the 1960s, Northern Ireland was on the brink of civil war between Protestant unionists and Catholic republicans. A civil rights movement, based on Catholics' resentment of unmet social reforms, led to a unionist backlash. The arrival of British troops to contain the unrest spurred the Provisional IRA movement to acts of terrorism that led to unionist paramilitary retaliation. In 1969, the Troubles began.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NICRA_1968_Derry_march.jpg>

Background to the Troubles –
Civil Rights Demonstrations in Derry, Northern Ireland, 1968

The Troubles (1969-1998). As the Troubles ignited, the political alignment of parties in Northern Ireland changed. The unionist, Protestant, and moderate UUP had been in power for half a century – since 1921. A new hardline, Protestant unionist party, the Democratic Unionist Party (DUP), was formed in 1971 to challenge UUP dominance. The militant Sinn Féin Party had long

led the Catholic, republican opposition. In 1970, the new Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) was formed to offer Catholics a more flexible party that was willing to compromise and share power with the unionists.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:President_Clinton_and_SDLP_leader_John_Hume.jpg>

John Hume (Right), Leader of the Social Democratic and Labour Party, 1979-2001 – With US President Bill Clinton, 1995

As political violence worsened, in 1972 the UK government suspended home rule in Northern Ireland and imposed direct rule from London, pending the cessation of hostilities and the agreement of the opposing parties to share political power.

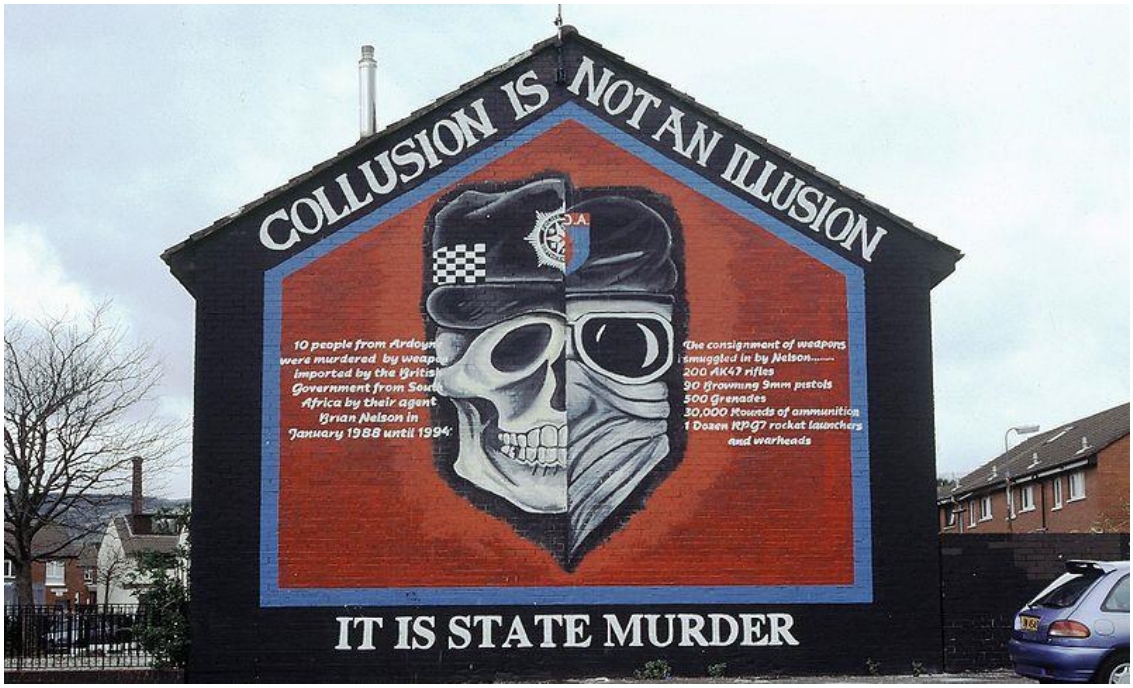
Sectarian violence persisted, and direct rule lasted until 1999. The bloodiest year was 1972, when 467 people were killed. During the era of the Troubles (1969-1998), Northern Ireland suffered 3,700 deaths, 40,000 injuries, and heightened insecurity, creating unmeasurable economic losses.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/File:Battle_of_bogside.jpg>

The Troubles Began in Derry/Londonderry, Battle of the Bogside, August 1969 – 3,700 Died in Three Decades of Civil War

The Good Friday Agreement (1998, also called the Belfast Agreement) was a carefully crafted compromise to end the political violence and restore home rule. Leaders in the UK (Tony

Blair), Ireland (Bertie Ahern), and the US (Bill Clinton) gave strong support, and George Mitchell, the US Special Envoy, aided negotiations. Northern Ireland regained home rule under an elected 108-seat Assembly and an appointed 12-member Executive Committee (cabinet) that enforced consensus. The IRA was given two years to decommission its weaponry and was permitted to serve on the Executive after disarming. Pending developments, the UK retained control of taxation, policing, and criminal justice.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Collusion_is_not_an_illusion.jpg>

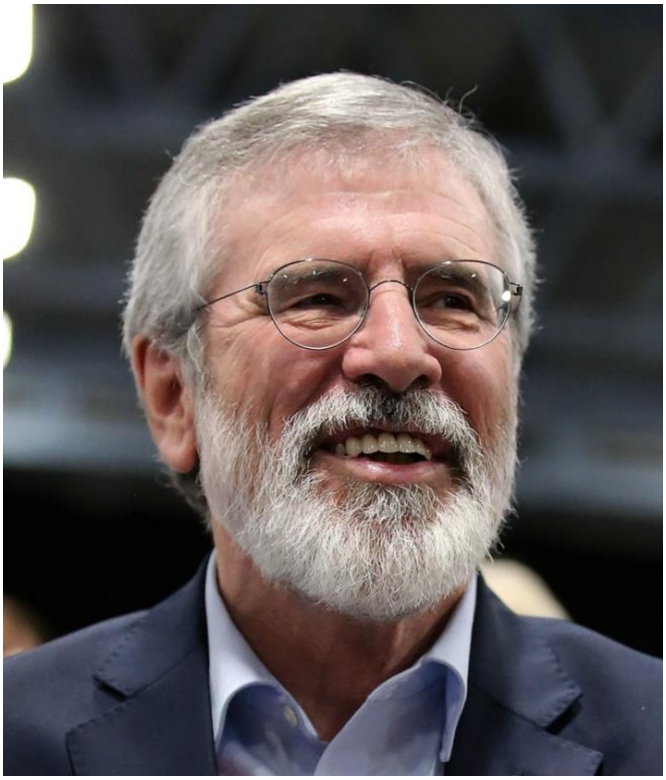
Republican Mural in Ardoyne, North Belfast, 1995 – The Troubles Officially Ended With the Good Friday Agreement, April 1998

In separate referenda, voters in Northern Ireland (71 percent) and in Ireland (94 percent) approved of the Agreement. The results of the 1998 election for the Assembly were (seats won): UUP, 28; SDLP, 24; DUP, 20, and Sinn Féin, 18. John Hume, SDLP leader (1979-2001), and David Trimble, UUP leader (1995-2005) shared the 1998 Nobel Peace Prize.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:1933_Nobel_Peace_Prize_awarded_to_Norman_Angell.JPG>

David Trimble (UUP) and John Hume (SDLP) Shared the Nobel Peace Prize (1998)

Autonomy (1999-present). Since the peace agreement in 1998, Northern Ireland has experienced political vicissitudes. The key change in the past two decades has been the steady rise of the two hardline parties, the DUP and Sinn Féin, at the expense of the two moderate parties that led the Good Friday Agreement, the UUP and the SDLP. Between 1999 and 2002, David Trimble (UUP) was named First Minister and Seamus Mallon (SDLP) served as Deputy First Minister (joint heads of government). Then the UK resumed direct rule to force a political compromise between the divided sectarian parties. In the Power-sharing Agreement of 2007, Ian Paisley (DUP) and Gerry Adams (Sinn Féin) agreed to share political power, and Britain devolved power once again.

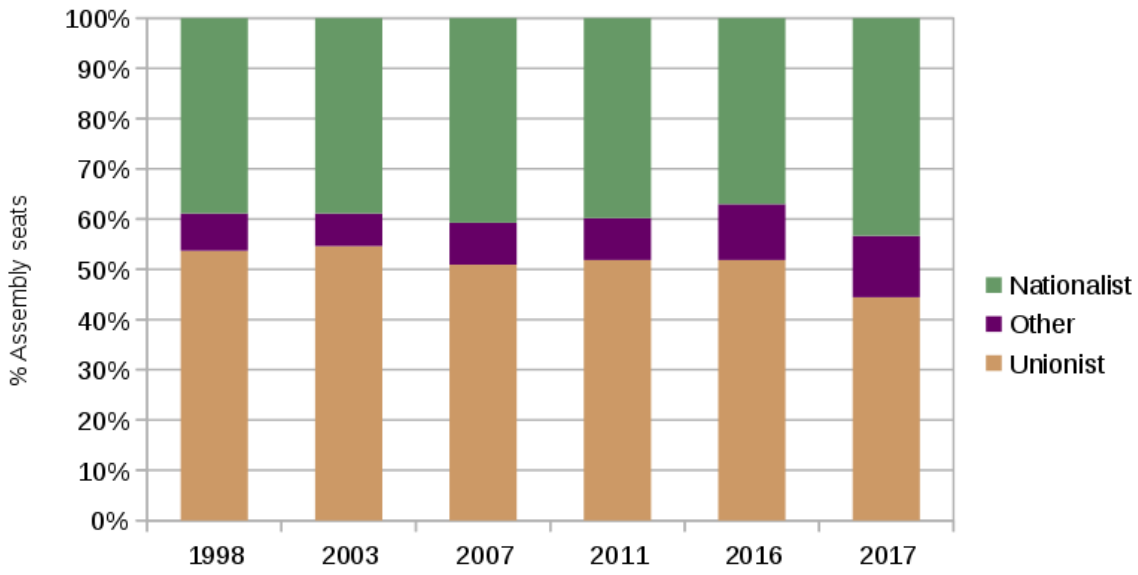


Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Gerry_Adams_-_26370225138.jpg>

Gerry Adams, Leader of Sinn Féin Party, 1983-2018 – Pictured At His Retirement From Politics in 2018

Since 2007, the DUP has won the most Assembly seats in all elections and named the First Minister – Ian Paisley (2007-2008), Peter Robinson (2008-2016), Arlene Foster (2016-2017, 2020-2021), and Paul Givan (2021-2022). Members of Sinn Féin – Martin McGuinness (2007-2017) and Michelle O'Neill (2020-2022) – have served as Deputy First Minister. In 2010, the UK completed the Good Friday process by devolving policing and

judiciary powers to the Assembly. The devolved government was in suspension between 2017 and 2020 because of political disagreements over Foster's alleged role in a scandal. A tenuous peace had finally returned to Northern Ireland.



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NI_Assembly_seat_share_by_designation.svg>

Results of Assembly Elections in Northern Ireland, 1998-2017 – Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) Has Won All Elections in Northern Ireland Since 2007

The Troubles took a heavy toll on the Ulster economy. The distribution of income and employment was similar to that of wealthy industrialized countries (percent): services, 75; industry, 20; and agriculture, 5. But Northern Ireland has only a few leading

sectors (aerospace, IT, engineering, and Irish whiskey), and its economy is dependent on subsidies from the UK (25 percent of GDP) and public sector employment (27 percent of jobs).

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Bombardier,_Belfast,_September_2012.JPG>

Bombardier Aerospace Factory, Belfast,
Employs 3,500 Highly-skilled Workers –
Sold to Spirit Aerosystems (US) in 2020 for $865 Million

Ulster's 1.9 million people had a per capita GDP of $37,700 in 2019, but that was only three-fourths of the level in the UK and just two-fifths of that in Ireland. Northern Ireland, as part of the

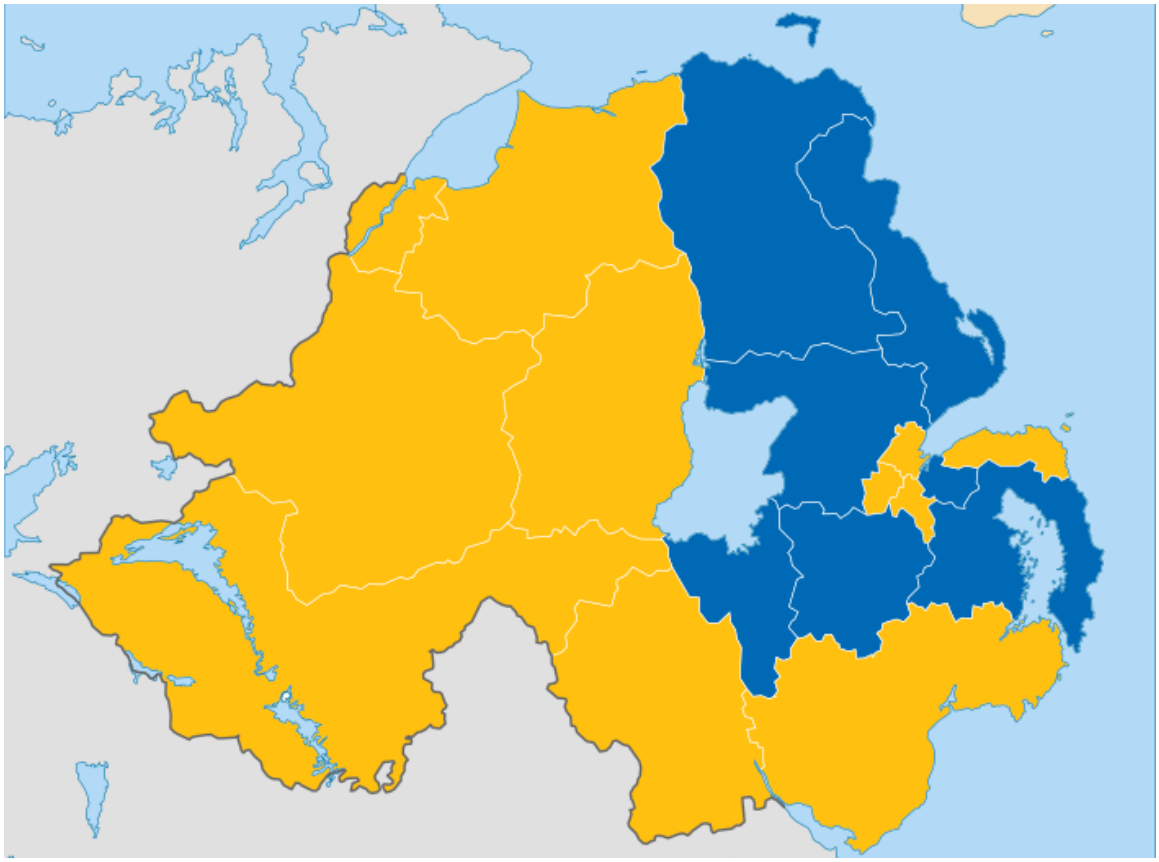
UK, was unable to mimic the growth path taken by the Republic of Ireland. Once the richest part of the island, Ulster had become the Republic's poor cousin.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:RoyalAvenueBelfast.jpg>

Royal Avenue, Belfast –
The Heart of the Disappointing Economy of Northern Ireland

Brexit (2016-present). In 2016, the UK government held a referendum on whether to leave the EU (Brexit). Within all of the UK, 52 percent voted to Leave, triggering the UK's Brexit negotiation with the EU. But in Northern Ireland, 56 percent voted to Remain, mainly because they did not want a hard border to

separate Ireland (which will remain in the EU) from Northern Ireland (so long as it stays in the UK).



Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:United_Kingdom_EU_referendum_2016_area_results_(Northern_Ireland).svg>

Brexit Vote in Northern Ireland, June 2016 –
(Remain, 56 Percent, Yellow; Leave, 44 Percent, Blue),
Leave Voters Mainly Resided in Protestant Areas

A key provision of the Good Friday Agreement (1998) was to preserve Ireland's open border, single market, and absence of barriers to trade and movement. All political parties in Northern

Ireland, including the DUP (which had not supported the 1998 agreement), opposed the imposition of a hard border dividing north from south. The conundrum was how Northern Ireland could remain part of the UK, after it had left the EU, while keeping an open border with Ireland, which is a part of the EU.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:No_Border_No_Barrier.jpg>

Sinn Féin Protest in 2015 Against a Hard Border – Dividing Northern Ireland from Ireland

In 2018, the UK and the EU agreed to an Irish backstop, whereby Northern Ireland would remain in the EU customs union

(thus avoiding a hard border) in the absence of a UK Brexit agreement by the end of 2020. In October 2019, the UK and the EU agreed on a new and very complicated protocol to the Brexit agreement. The new protocol replaced the Irish backstop. Northern Ireland will be *de jure* in the UK, but it will be *de facto* in the EU customs union, single market, and VAT zone. Because England, Wales, and Scotland exited the EU in 2020, there is now a border in the Irish Sea that separates Ireland (north and south) from Great Britain.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:Protest_against_Brexit_(32892195094).jpg>

2019 Irish Protocol Avoided EU Frontier in Ireland – Supported on Both Sides of the Border Between Northern Ireland and Ireland

In December 2019, the UK completed its Brexit negotiations with the EU. The Northern Ireland protocol is a part of the final agreement. Because the UK and the EU agreed on open trade without tariffs and import quotas, the risk of smuggling goods between Northern Ireland and the Republic of Ireland is greatly reduced. EU border checks are required for health and plant disease (phytosanitary) regulations. Many details of the Irish protocol need to be worked out. It remains to be seen how well trade arrangements under the agreed protocol will work.

Under the protocol, there is no hard border dividing Northern Ireland from the Republic of Ireland, preserving the Good Friday Agreement. But in February 2022, Jeffrey Donaldson, the leader of the DUP, pulled his party's First Minister, Paul Givan, out of the devolved administration of Northern Ireland and thereby collapsed it. Donaldson threatened that his party would rejoin the government only if the border in the Irish Sea is ended. But if the protocol were overridden, it is expected that Sinn Féin would

exercise its refusal to rejoin a devolved government. The political crisis continues.

Source: Wikimedia Commons, available at <https://commons.wikimedia.org/wiki/File:NImap-CIA.jpg>

Contemporary Northern Ireland in the United Kingdom

Time Line for Ireland

7000-3500 BCE	Mesolithic Era – nomadic hunter-gatherers in Ireland
3500-750 BCE	Neolithic Era – peoples migrated to Ireland from Asia – brought agriculture
750 BCE	Belgicae Celts arrived in Ireland – iron plows/weapons, pottery wheels, hill forts
43 CE	Roman Emperor Claudius conquered Celtic Britons – Romans never conquered Ireland
3rd-4th centuries	Gaelic-speaking Scotti emigrated into Scotland from Northern Ireland – extended the Irish Kingdom of Dal Riata into Argyll
411	Palladius, missionary from Gaul – began the conversion of Ireland to Christianity – syncretized beliefs from Celtic Druidism
521-597	St. Columba, Irish monk – established a renowned monastery at Iona – led conversion of the Picts in northern Scotland
late 6th century	Christianity well established in Ireland – political structure was seven over-kingdoms and numerous sub-kingdoms
7th-8th centuries	Golden Age in Ireland – decentralized kingdoms – monastic centers/proto-towns – evangelism, scholarship, asceticism

8th-9th centuries	Ui Neill clan (Tara, northern Ireland) – defeated Eoganachta clan (Rock of Cashel, southern Ireland) – loose-federated kingship
795-839	Norwegian Vikings raided Irish monasteries (gold, food) – set up trading bases in Dublin, Waterford, Wexford, Limerick, and Cork
839-914	Vikings specialized in merchant trade, adopted Christianity, integrated into Irish society – principal base was Dublin
914-1014	Ireland suffered new Viking raids – defenses elsewhere in Europe grew stronger
c. 940-1014	Brian Boru, King of Munster – briefly unified Ireland in 1002, became High King
1014	Battle of Clontarf – Brian Boru defeated a Viking coalition, but was killed in the battle
1014-1170	Irish conquered and ruled Viking settlements – Vikings paid tribute, ran international trade, fought as mercenaries in wars between Irish rival kingdoms
1066	William of Normandy conquered England – Norman military aristocracy appropriated most productive parts of Great Britain
1170	Anglo-Norman conquest of Dublin – Richard de Clare, Earl of Pembroke (Strongbow) – subjugated Irish and Vikings

1171	Henry II, King of England, invaded Ireland – Anglo-Norman leaders paid homage – Ireland became an English colony – English law and government, manorial agriculture
1300	Anglo-Normans controlled three-fourths of Ireland and most fertile regions – Irish kings or clans controlled north and parts of east
1500	Anglo-Norman lords held only about one-fourth of Ireland – the English Pale around Dublin and much of the south-coastal region
1536	Protestant Reformation began in Ireland – King Henry VIII of England made head of the Church of Ireland
1541	King Henry VIII of England named himself King of Ireland – deepened English rule
1593-1602	O'Neill's Rebellion (the Nine-Year War) – led by Hugh O'Neill, Earl of Tyrone – harshly suppressed by Queen Elizabeth I – ended the power of the Gaelic lordships
1609	James I removed Catholics from their lands in Ulster – re-settled 30,000 immigrant tenant farmers from Scotland and 10,000 from England – Antrim and Down Counties
1649-1660	Ireland under British military rule during the Cromwell Commonwealth

1652	Act of Settlement – led to the share of farm land owned by Irish Catholics falling from 70 percent to 10 percent
1689	William of Orange and his wife, Mary (a daughter of James II) accepted English and Scottish crowns
1740-1741	severe famine in Ireland caused 300,000 deaths – but famines rare in 18th century
1798	Ulster had a short but severe rebellion – Britain suppressed it – 35,000 Irish died
1800	Irish Parliament passed the Irish Act of Union – ended Ireland's parliament – put Ireland in the United Kingdom in 1801
1821	population of Ireland was 6.2 million – arable land was 14 million acres – 5,000 Protestant landlords owned 90 percent of farmland
1821-1915	44 million people emigrated from Europe – 4.5 million from Ireland – mostly to the Americas or Australasia
1841	Ireland's population peaked at 8.2 million
1845-1849	Great Irish Famine – 1 million people died from starvation and disease (mainly typhus and relapsing fever) – 1 million emigrated (to North America and Britain)
1912	*Titanic l*aunched in Belfast shipyards

1914	Home Rule Act – re-instituted an Irish Parliament within the UK – but was delayed with the onset of the First World War
1914-1918	First World War – Ireland fought with Britain plus France, Russia and the US against Germany, Austria-Hungary, and Ottoman Empire
1916	Easter Rising – precipitated by the Irish Republican Brotherhood – suppressed by the British army in one week
1919-1921	Anglo-Irish War – Irish Republican Army (IRA) guerrillas fought stalemate with British army
1920	Government of Ireland Act – partitioned Ireland into two regions – the south, with 3.1 million people, 26 counties, and 5/6 of the land – the north, with 1.3 million people, 6 counties, and 1/6 of the land
1921	Anglo-Irish Treaty – created Irish Free State, self-governing dominion in the British Commonwealth, in 26 south counties – 6 counties in the north opted to remain in UK
1921	Ireland's population was 4.4 million – following massive land reform (1891-1909), 250,000 ex-tenants owned 80 percent of farmland

1921-1969	Ulster Unionist Party (UUP), Protestant and unionist – dominated Northern Ireland's politics – held at least two-thirds of the seats in the Ulster and UK parliaments
1922-1923	Irish Civil War – Irish government forces fought the Irish Republican Army that opposed partition – caused 1,000 deaths
1922-1932	Irish Free State governed by Cumann na nGaedhael (Party of the Irish) – led by William Cosgrave
1932-1948	Éamon de Valera (1882-1975) – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1937	new constitution adopted in Ireland – created independent Republic of Ireland (Eire) within the Commonwealth
1938	Éamon de Valera negotiated treaties with the UK – closed British bases in Ireland – settled Irish land payments to Britain – reduced tariffs
1939-1945	Second World War – Ireland officially neutral – but de facto pro-Allies
1948-1951	John A. Costello – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
1949	Republic of Ireland Act – Ireland left the British Commonwealth

1951-1954	Éamon de Valera – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1954-1957	John A. Costello – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
1957-1959	Éamon de Valera – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1959-1973	Éamon de Valera (1882-1975) – President
1959-1966	Seán Lemass – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1966-1973	Jack Lynch – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1969-1998	The Troubles in Northern Ireland – Northern Ireland suffered 3,700 deaths, 40,000 injuries, and heightened insecurity, creating unmeasurable economic losses
1970	Social Democratic and Labour Party (SDLP) formed – offered Catholics in Northern Ireland a more flexible party – willing to share power with the unionists
1971	Democratic Unionist Party (DUP) formed – hardline, Protestant, unionist party – challenged dominance of Ulster Unionist Party in Northern Ireland
1972-1999	UK government suspended home rule in Northern Ireland – imposed direct rule from London – pending cessation of hostilities

	and agreement of opposing parties to share political power
1973	Ireland (with UK and Denmark) joined the European Economic Community (later European Union)
1973-1977	Liam Cosgrove – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
1977-1979	Jack Lynch – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1979	Ireland joined the European Monetary System
1979-1981	Charles Haughey – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1981-1982	Garrett FitzGerald – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
1982-1982	Charles Haughey – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1982-1987	Garrett FitzGerald – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
1987-1992	Charles Haughey – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1990-1997	Mary Robinson– President of Ireland
1992-1994	Albert Reynolds – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party

1994-1997	John Bruton – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
1997-2008	Bertie Ahern – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
1997-2011	Mary McAleese – President of Ireland
1998	Good Friday (Belfast) Agreement – Northern Ireland regained home rule – 108-seat Assembly (elected), 12-member Executive Committee (appointed) – IRA given 2 years to decommission its weaponry
1998	British Parliament devolved authority on all issues, except foreign policy, defense, macro-economic policy, and social security
2002	Ireland joined the Euro Zone – adopted the Euro as its currency
2007-2008	Ian Paisley – First Minister of Northern Ireland – Democratic Unionist Party
2010-2016	Peter Robinson – First Minister of Northern Ireland – Democratic Unionist Party
2008-2010	Ireland suffered an economic crisis – property bubble burst in 2008 – run on Irish banks in 2009
2010	troika (EU Commission, European Central Bank, and IMF) lent Ireland $122 billion –

	extreme austerity program (raised taxes and cut spending) – reduced government deficits
2008-2011	Brian Cowen – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
2011-present	Michael D. Higgins – President of Ireland
2011-2017	Enda Kenny – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
2016	British voters opted to leave the European Union (52 percent in favor of Brexit) – 56 percent of voters in Northern Ireland favored to remain
2016-2017	Arlene Foster – First Minister of Northern Ireland – Democratic Unionist Party
2017-2020	Leo Varadkar – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fine Gael
2018	UK and European Union agreed to an Irish backstop – Northern Ireland to remain in EU customs union (thus avoiding a hard border), if no UK Brexit agreement by the end 2020
2019	UK and EU protocol – Northern Ireland will be *de jure* in UK, but *de facto* in the EU customs union, single market, and VAT zone – border in the Irish Sea will separate Ireland (north and south) from Great Britain
2020	The UK left the European Union and concluded a Brexit treaty with the EU –

	Northern Ireland protocol is a part of the final agreement – no hard border divides Northern Ireland from Republic of Ireland
2020-present	Michael Martin – Prime Minster (Taoiseach) – Fianna Fáil Party
2020-2021	Arlene Foster– First Minister of Northern Ireland – Democratic Unionist Party
2021-2022	Paul Givan– First Minister of Northern Ireland – Democratic Unionist Party
2022	Democratic Unionist Party left devolved government of Northern Ireland

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Sites Visited in the Republic of Ireland and Northern Ireland

Sites Visited in Food, Culture, and Politics of Ireland
Stanford Alumni Association Travel/Study Program
March 28 to April 8, 2022

Dublin, The Republic of Ireland

We began our circular tour of Ireland in Dublin, the capital of Ireland since 1171. Founded as a Norwegian Viking fortified base in 831, Dublin was the leading Viking port for three centuries. The Anglo-Norman lords made Dublin their capital after they conquered much of Ireland in the late 12th century. For 500 years, Dublin was a walled medieval town, ruling only The Pale, a small area of English settlement. In the late 17th century, French Huguenot refugees and Flemish weavers emigrated to Dublin and established a major linen-and-cotton cloth industry. Dublin grew to become a city of 130,000 by 1800. However, the Act of Union (1801) between Ireland and Great Britain abolished the Irish Parliament and reduced Dublin's importance. The city stagnated economically for the next 160 years. Dublin began booming in the 1990s, when Ireland's economy became the Celtic Tiger. Today, Dublin is the European headquarters for many high-tech companies, including Google, Microsoft, Amazon, and Facebook.

Our Stanford group started its visit to Dublin with a walking tour in the Georgian Quarter, led by Professor Stephen Mandal. We visited the magnificent Old Library in Trinity College Dublin (founded in 1592) to see the Book of Kells, a beautifully illustrated religious manuscript created by Irish monks c. 800 CE. In Merrion Square, we admired a modern statue of Oscar Wilde, and in St. Stephen's Green, we walked through a key site in the 1916 Easter Rising, an unsuccessful bid for independence. On our second day in Dublin, we visited the Irish Emigration Museum (EPIC) and were treated to a stimulating panel discussion, led by Professor

Neil Hegarty, of the impact of Ireland's emigration on the island's culture and economy. The Guinness Brewery was established at St. James's Gate in 1759 and became the world's largest brewery in the 19th century, We enjoyed a self-guided tour of the brewery's museum, learned how to pour a perfect pint of Irish stout in the Academy Bar, and tasted another Guinness in the Gravity Bar.

Cork, The Republic of Ireland

We bussed southwestward from Dublin to Cork. Cork was founded in the 6th century by St. Fin Barre, an Irish monk. In 915, the Vikings established a fortified trading port on the banks of the River Lee near Cork Harbor, one of the world's largest natural harbors. Following the Anglo-Norman invasion of Ireland, King Henry II of England took control of the walled town of Cork in 1172. During the medieval period, Cork was a small port-town run by Hiberno-Norman lords. The town later became an outlet for the export of Irish dairy products, especially butter and cheese. In 1919-1920, Cork, a center of Irish nationalist resistance to British rule, was extensively burned down by British forces in retaliation for paramilitary activity. Today, Cork has a population of 210,000 and is the Republic of Ireland's second largest city. It is the center of Ireland's important pharmaceutical industry, hosting large manufacturing facilities for Pfizer, Johnson and Johnson, and Novartis. Cork is also the European headquarters for Apple.

En route from Dublin to Cork, we made two stops. The first was in Tipperary to visit the Cashel Farmhouse Cheesemakers, a family-operated business that exports its renowned Cashel Blue cheese worldwide. The second was to see the Rock of Cashel, the seat of the Gaelic kings of Munster before the Anglo-Norman invasion in the late 12th century. Cormac's Chapel, built between 1127 and 1134, has vaulted ceilings, wide arches, and beautiful Irish frescoes. The Cathedral, constructed 1235-1270 on the cruciform plan, abuts a large residential castle. In Cork, we stayed

at the historic Ballymaloe House to enjoy the spectacular grounds and be introduced to Cork's culinary traditions. We visited the Ballymaloe Cookery School, which has 65 students and 100 acres of organic gardens. We also walked through Cork's English market, a covered market featuring food and endless other items, and toured the Midleton Distillery, the largest in Ireland, that produces Jameson, Powers, and Midleton Very Rare Irish whiskey.

Galway, The Republic of Ireland

The Stanford group bussed northward from Cork on a three-hour drive to Galway. Galway, the seat of County Galway, is a port town in western Ireland. It was founded in 1124 when the king of Connacht built a castle on Galway Bay. In the 1230s, Richard de Burgh, an Hiberno-Norman lord, captured the castle and assumed leadership in Galway. The new rulers built city walls in 1270 and developed Galway as a center for trade, especially with Spain. In 1545, Galway gained jurisdiction over the Aran Islands, located 20 miles to the southwest. For 250 years in the 15th-17th centuries, the "Tribes of Galway," fourteen merchant families mostly descended from de Burgh, dominated Galway's export-import trade. In 1652, Oliver Cromwell set up a new class of landed proprietors and ended the Tribes' power. Today, Galway is a growing small city of 80,000 people. Its thriving economy relies on manufacturing medical equipment (Boston Scientific Corporation and Medtronic), information technology (Cisco and SAP SE), and tourism.

We began our exploration of western Ireland with a drive through the spectacular Connemara landscapes and a stop in the Kylemore Abbey. Kylemore Castle was built in 1871 as a 70-room, private home by an English doctor. In 1920, the Benedictine Nuns purchased the castle after they were forced to leave Ypres, Belgium during World War I. The Abbey attracts tourists to its Victorian gardens. Our group next was treated to a scenic cruise in the Killary, Ireland's only fjord, with a craft-beer tasting on board.

En route northeastward from Galway to Belfast, we made two stops in County Meath. The Hill of Tara features 20 ancient monuments, notably the Stone of Destiny, and it was also the site of the inauguration and seat of the High Kings of Ireland. Slane Castle was built in 1785 by the Conyngham family, descendants of Ulster Scot planters who had emigrated to northern Ireland in 1611. Slane's natural amphitheater, which seats 85,000, has hosted concerts by The Rolling Stones, Bon Jovi, and Metallica.

Belfast, Northern Ireland, United Kingdom

Belfast, a port-city located at the confluence of the River Lagan and the Belfast Lough, has a population of 344,000. Belfast has been the capital of Northern Ireland since partition in 1920. Humans occupied the site of Belfast during the Stone, Bronze, and Iron Ages. In 1177, John de Courci, an Anglo-Norman lord, built a castle in Belfast. Sir Arthur Chichester, a leader of the Ulster plantation movement, built a new castle in Belfast in 1611. In 1685, French Huguenot refugees fled to Belfast and started a linen industry. After the Industrial Revolution, Belfast became the world's leading center of linen manufacture. Shipbuilding in Belfast started in the 1790s. Harland & Wolff, founded in 1861, was the world's largest shipbuilding company in 1912 when it built the *Titanic*. Belfast began a painful industrial decline in the 1960s, exacerbated by the Troubles (1969-1998). Today, the economy of Belfast relies on the manufacture of airplane parts, higher education, tourism, and port, financial, and government services.

We began our exploration of Northern Ireland with a visit to the Coorymeela Center, north of Belfast, where Alex Wimberley explained the center's impressive, 50-year program of conflict resolution and post-trauma healing during and after the Troubles. We next visited Bushmills Distillery for a delightful tasting of three Irish whiskeys. En route back to Belfast, we walked along the Giants Causeway, a remarkable geological display of more

than 40,000 natural basalt columns. We spent a stimulating morning at the Millennium Integrated Primary School, where we learned about the challenges and benefits of integrated education (in schools that have students and staff from both the Protestant and Catholic communities). We next visited the impressive Titanic Museum, which opened in 2012, and learned how the Harland & Wolff Company built the *Titanic* and what caused its sinking with the loss of 1,500 lives. Later, we spent a poignant morning visiting the Peace Walls in Belfast, guided by participants in the Troubles.